



## Weatherization Assistance Program

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Assistance Program



*Eva Collier was living on \$600 a month when her gas bills soared to \$800. In November 2001, her home became the five millionth home weatherized by the Program.*

### Weatherization Works!

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program reduces energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, while reinforcing their health and safety. The Program provides energy efficiency services to approximately 100,000 homes every year using DOE funds.

- Weatherization returns \$1.53 in energy-related benefits for every \$1 invested in the Program.
- For every \$1 invested by DOE, the Program leverages \$1.54 in other federal, state, utility, and private resources.

### Eligible Households

Household energy use comprises 22% of total energy consumption in the United States. Americans spend \$160 billion each

year on home energy, with low-income households spending a disproportionate share on energy bills.

- Low-income households typically spend 16% of their total annual income on residential energy costs, compared with 5% for median-income households.
- The average expenditure in low-income households is nearly \$1,673 annually. Low-income families must often cut back on other necessities, such as groceries or medicine, to pay their energy bills.

More than 33.8 million households are eligible for weatherization services. Any household at or below 150% of poverty is considered low-income. However, some eligible households may require services beyond the scope of the Weatherization Program. Just under half of all eligible

households are good candidates for weatherization services.

### Impact on Low-Income Americans

Weatherization alleviates the heavy energy burden on low-income households and helps them become self-sufficient.

Weatherization:

- Creates average energy savings of \$358 per year.
- Reduces a household's annual gas heating consumption by 32%.
- Continues to save money and energy every year.
- Improves health and safety by eliminating energy-related hazards.
- Avoided \$1.6 billion in energy costs during winter 2005 for all households weatherized.



Since the Program's inception, over 5.6 million low-income homes have been weatherized from all funding sources.

### Delivering Services to Low-Income Families

Professionally trained weatherization crews use computerized energy audits and advanced diagnostic equipment, such as a blower door, manometer, or infrared camera to determine the most cost-effective measures appropriate for each home.

- Typical measures may include installing insulation, sealing ducts, tuning and repairing heating and cooling systems, mitigating air infiltration, and reducing electric base load consumption.



*Weatherization crew insulating attic for customer*

- Weatherization crews also perform health and safety tests that may include testing heating units and appliances for combustion safety, carbon monoxide, and gas leaks; assessing moisture damage; checking electrical system safety; replacing unsafe heating and cooling systems; and installing smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

### Impact on Communities

Weatherization helps revitalize communities by spurring economic growth and reducing environmental impacts. For every \$1 invested,

***More than 5,600,000 homes have been weatherized with DOE and leveraged funding since 1976.***

weatherization returns \$2.60 in energy and non-energy related benefits.

Weatherization:

- Reduces the export of local energy dollars and keeps more money in the community.
- Improves energy affordability, making housing more affordable. This reduces cases of homelessness and frequent forced mobility, and lowers demand for public assistance.
- Decreases electricity generation and resulting pollution. This improves local air quality and reduces adverse health effects, particularly asthma.
- Avoids residential and power plant emissions of carbon dioxide, a leading greenhouse gas. Weatherization measures reduce carbon dioxide emissions by one metric ton per weatherized home, or one-third the average emissions of an automobile.
- Reduces demand for imported oil. Decreases national energy consumption by the equivalent of 18 million barrels of oil annually.

### Funding and Production History

DOE provides core program funding to all 50 states and the District of Columbia through formula grants. Once DOE awards the grants, states contract with more than 900 local agencies nationwide. Contractors include community action agencies, other non-profits, and local governments, who deliver services to low-income families.

Many states use the DOE funding to leverage additional funding sources. Money received from DOE often covers the training/technical assistance and administrative needs of an agency; by leveraging additional dollars, the state and local programs increase the services rendered and the number of homes served. Leveraged funds can be credited with increasing our number of families served to 5.6 million over the history of this Program.



### A Strong Energy Portfolio for a Strong America

Energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy will mean a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy independence for America. Working with a wide array of state, community, industry and university partners, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy invests in a diverse portfolio of energy technologies.



U.S. Department of Energy

### Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Bringing you a prosperous future where energy is clean, abundant, reliable, and affordable

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